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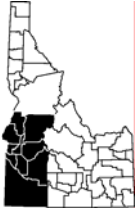
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THANKS!

Editors, Idaho Employment



# Southwestern Idaho News

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Boise-Nampa Metropolitan Statistical Area for May 2006 was unchanged from April at 3 percent. May's unemployment rate was a half percentage point lower than May 2005. The civilian labor force increased by 2,300 from April, pushing further above the 290,000 level for the second month in row. Total employment increased 2,100 while the ranks of unemployed job seekers rose by 200. That kept the jobless rate stable over the two months. The unemployment rate is at historic lows in the metropolitan area. Three percent is nearing the point to where it will likely be difficult to move much lower. The busy summer season of construction and tourism have arrived, and the labor force and total employment should continue grow.

Nonfarm payroll jobs in the area continued rising in May, albeit by slightly less than April's increase. May saw 2,400 new jobs, and over the past year, nonfarm jobs are up 8.7 percent, or more than 21,000. Contrary to recent months, construction

**Southwestern Idaho Table 2: May 2006  
Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for Southwestern Idaho Counties**

	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unemployed	Percent Unemployed	Number Employed
Ada	196,005	5,582	2.8	190,423
Adams	1,933	118	6.1	1,815
Boise	4,315	127	2.9	4,188
Canyon	81,576	2,714	3.3	78,862
Elmore	11,128	537	4.8	10,591
Gem	7,827	315	4.0	7,512
Owyhee	4,944	114	2.3	4,830
Payette	10,370	512	4.9	9,858
Valley	5,152	187	3.6	4,965
Washington	4,994	192	3.8	4,802
Statewide	759,219	26,197	3.5	733,022

**Southwestern Idaho Table 1: Boise City-Nampa MSA Labor Force & Employment (Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties)**

	May 2006*	Apr 2006	May 2005	% Change	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	294,700	292,400	283,600	1	4
Unemployment	8,900	8,700	9,800	2.3	-9.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0	3.0	3.5		
Total Employment	285,800	283,700	273,800	0.7	4.4
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	294,500	291,400	283,400	1.1	3.9
Unemployment	7,800	8,800	8,800	-11.4	-11.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.6	3.0	3.1		
Total Employment	286,700	282,600	274,600	1.5	4.4
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	268,700	266,300	247,300	0.9	8.7
<b>GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	53,100	52,400	49,500	1.3	7.3
<b>Natural Resources &amp; Construction</b>	22,400	21,900	19,600	2.3	14.3
Construction	22,100	21,700	19,300	1.8	14.5
<b>Manufacturing</b>	30,700	30,500	29,900	0.7	2.7
Durable Goods	24,500	24,300	23,700	0.8	3.4
Wood Product Manufacturing	2,200	2,200	2,200	0.0	0.0
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	1,500	1,500	1,300	0.0	15.4
Machinery Manufacturing	1,200	1,200	1,200	0.0	0.0
Computer & Electronic Manufacturing	14,000	14,000	14,400	0.0	-2.8
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	2,400	2,400	2,100	0.0	14.3
Other Durable Goods	3,200	3,000	2,500	6.7	28.0
Nondurable Goods	6,200	6,200	6,200	0.0	0.0
Food Manufacturing	4,200	4,300	4,400	-2.3	-4.5
Printing & Related Support Activities	700	700	700	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	1,300	1,200	1,100	8.3	18.2
<b>SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES</b>	215,600	213,900	197,800	0.8	9.0
<b>Trade, Transportation, &amp; Utilities</b>	52,600	51,900	48,200	1.3	9.1
Trade	45,000	44,400	41,200	1.4	9.2
Wholesale Trade	12,500	12,300	11,400	1.6	9.6
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	7,400	7,300	6,900	1.4	7.2
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	3,600	3,600	3,500	0.0	2.9
Retail Trade	32,500	32,100	29,800	1.2	9.1
Food & Beverage Stores	4,500	4,400	4,300	2.3	4.7
General Merchandise Stores	6,300	6,200	6,000	1.6	5.0
All Other Retail Trade	21,700	21,500	19,500	0.9	11.3
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	7,600	7,500	7,000	1.3	8.6
Utilities	600	600	600	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	7,000	6,900	6,400	1.4	9.4
<b>Information</b>	5,200	5,200	5,200	0.0	0.0
Telecommunications	2,500	2,500	2,200	0.0	13.6
<b>Financial Activities</b>	14,800	14,800	8,400	0.0	76.2
Finance & Insurance	10,300	10,200	4,500	1.0	128.9
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	4,500	4,600	3,900	-2.2	15.4
<b>Professional &amp; Business Services</b>	38,100	38,200	36,900	-0.3	3.3
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	11,100	11,300	10,600	-1.8	4.7
Management of Companies & Ent.	5,900	5,800	5,600	1.7	5.4
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt.	21,100	21,100	20,700	0.0	1.9
<b>Educational &amp; Health Services</b>	32,200	32,000	31,000	0.6	3.9
Educational Services	3,100	3,100	2,800	0.0	10.7
Health Care & Social Assistance	29,100	28,900	28,200	0.7	3.2
Hospitals	9,400	9,400	9,100	0.0	3.3
<b>Leisure &amp; Hospitality</b>	23,400	22,900	22,100	2.2	5.9
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,300	3,200	2,700	3.1	22.2
Accommodation & Food Services	20,100	19,700	19,400	2.0	3.6
Accommodation	2,200	2,100	2,100	4.8	4.8
Food Services & Drinking Places	17,900	17,600	17,300	1.7	3.5
<b>Other Services</b>	7,400	7,300	6,200	1.4	19.4
<b>Total Government</b>	41,900	41,600	39,800	0.7	5.3
Federal Government	5,600	5,500	5,800	1.8	-3.4
State & Local Government	36,300	36,100	34,000	0.6	6.8
State Government	13,900	13,900	13,400	0.0	3.7
State Government Education	4,800	4,800	4,600	0.0	4.3
State Government Administration	9,100	9,100	8,800	0.0	3.4
Local Government	22,400	22,200	20,600	0.9	8.7
Local Government Education	14,200	14,000	12,800	1.4	10.9
Local Government Administration	8,200	8,200	7,800	0.0	5.1

\* Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

slowed, reflecting industry concern over the past several months that workers are becoming scarce. There is plenty of work, but contractors are having a difficult time finding enough qualified workers. Despite this, construction added 16.7 percent of the new jobs in May while only making up 8.2 percent of total nonfarm jobs.

Two industries that experienced strong job growth in May were both wholesale and retail trade as the busy summer shopping season arrived. With new retail businesses opening at a rapid pace and the construction season now in full swing, the growth is expected and welcome. Leisure and hospitality businesses were a significant contributor to job creation in May as restaurants and bars geared up for the busy summer tourist season. In addition, area recreational attractions hired more workers to serve the many additional customers during the summer. The May 2006 civilian labor force and total employment figures for all 10 counties in southwestern Idaho are shown in Treasure Valley Table 2 on page 13.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Boise MSA

- Shareholders of Lexar Media Inc. recently approved a bid from Micron to purchase the company. Seventy percent of the votes cast were in favor of the buyout worth approximately \$790 million. This purchase of Lexar will allow Micron to sell NAND flash memory products directly to retailers through Lexar's already established networks. NAND flash memory is able to retain and store information when power is shut off. NAND is used in devices such as iPods, cellular phones and digital cameras.
- During its last fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 2005, the Greater Boise Auditorium District experienced a 10 percent increase in room tax collections that totaled almost \$3 million. In the current fiscal year, room tax collections are currently running \$74,000 above last year at the same time, an increase of 5.5 percent.
- Construction crews have started a \$500,000 renovation project on the 99-year-old Caldwell Train Depot. The project is financed by a grant from the Idaho Transportation Department. Exterior brick is being regouted, the trim repainted, the hardwood floors refinished and the windows repaired and reglazed. The depot will also get updated plumbing, heating and air conditioning as well as new lighting. The work could be finished in time for Caldwell's Indian Creek Festival in mid-September. Another \$166,000 grant will pay for a new roof, dormer windows and a new ticket counter over the next 18 months.
- Over the last year and a half, 35 airplane hangars have been added to the Caldwell Industrial Airport. This is significant considering there were only approximately 165 hangars built between 1975 when

the airport first opened and late 2004. A robust local economy and keen interest in flying within the area have been credited for the airport's recent rapid growth.

- Aluma-Glass has recently moved its operations and 35 employees to Boise from Nampa. The company sold its building in Nampa, a 122,000 square-foot manufacturing facility, to a local investment group. The facility was no longer needed after Aluma-Glass stopped making vinyl windows. The company still manufactures aluminum commercial windows and owns a glass and glazing company specializing in retail storefronts.
- The cost of living in the metropolitan area in May increased by 0.4 percent after rising 1.1 percent in April. May's increase is largely due to rising fuel prices that drove transportation costs up 1.7 percent. Nationally, the Consumer Price Index increased 0.5 percent in May.
- Developers have targeted land southeast of Boise for some major developments in the near future. They are currently working on 11 planned communities to be built on 23,000 acres just south of the city of Boise's impact area. The 11 proposed communities range in size from 535 acres to 5,881 acres.
- With the region's building boom has come the inevitable – a shortage of workers. Many area construction companies are having a difficult time finding workers and are even turning down projects because of it. Some contractors are offering expanded benefits and quarterly or annual bonuses to entice workers onto their payrolls and keep them from going out of state.
- Boise and Wilder will host this year's World Potato Congress. It is the organization's first meeting ever held in the United States. Wilder will host an international equipment exhibit as well as a demonstration farm show. Boise will be hosting the seminar and workshop portion of the event Aug. 21-26.
- MotivePower of Boise recently won a \$21 million contract to remanufacture 16 commuter locomotives for Pacific Harbor Line Inc. in Southern California. MotivePower will be fitting the locomotives with 2,000 horsepower diesel engines designed to reduce exhaust emissions.

### Valley County

- Tamarack Resort recently reported \$8.4 million in operating revenues during the fiscal year that ended April 30. The resort also disclosed that expenses were greater than revenues during this time but declined to specify by how much. Sixty percent of the operating revenue came in during the ski season from November through April. In addition, 127 certificates of occupancy have been issued by Valley

County to resort homeowners, and the resort itself has received 32 certificates of occupancy for various operations and hotel rooms.

- Voters in the McCall-Donnelly School District recently passed a \$28.5 million school bond to build a new elementary school in McCall, restore and expand the McCall-Donnelly High School, add on to the Donnelly Elementary School and buy new equipment and furniture. Construction is scheduled to begin in April 2007.
- Land values in Valley County continue to escalate rapidly. Recent property tax assessments showed the total value of nearly 24,000 pieces of property in the county was up 58 percent from 2005. All private land in Valley County was valued at \$2.6 billion in 2005. This year the total value is \$4.1 billion. Since 2004, total assessed valuation of private land has gone up 128 percent.

#### **Adams County**

- The city of Council is applying for a \$500,000 Rural Community Block Grant for a new building in the business park for robotics manufacturer Composite Systems Inc. Council will match the grant by donating the land for the building and providing city equipment and personnel to do some of the work. The city is also applying for a \$50,000 Gem Grant to help bring Composite Systems Inc. to Council. The owners of the company want to be up and running by the fall of 2007 and will be initially hiring 25 to 30 people at between \$10 and \$20 an hour plus benefits.
- Brundage Mountain Resort and the Payette National Forest recently completed a land swap that gives Brundage 388 acres of land surrounding the base of the mountain the resort is built on while the Payette National Forest gets 350 acres of wetlands and streams with bull trout, salmon and steelhead habitat.
- With expiration of its subdivision moratorium, the Adams County Commission has adopted a new comprehensive plan and updated subdivision and zoning ordinances. In addition, the county also adopted a requirement that 10 percent of lots within a development be designated for affordable housing. The lots can be outside the development if the county approves.

#### **Elmore County**

- Mayfield is the proposed location for a large new planned community. The development contemplates 5,000 building lots on 1,800 acres. WRG Design Inc., which has offices all over the northwest including an office in Boise, is the developer.
- Construction is moving along on the Marathon Cheese facility in Mountain Home. The foundation work has been completed and support beams for the walls have been erected. According to the Moun-

tain Home Economic Development Office, the Marathon facility should be fully staffed and running by early 2007.

- Northwest Motor Sports has announced plans to build a giant \$200 million motor speedway on 1,600 acres in Elmore County just off Simco Road. The project is being called War Eagle Speedways and will include seven tracks from a 1 ¼ mile oval to a BMX super track and include an indoor track and convention center. The estimated date for completion on the speedway is spring 2008.
- An election will be held Aug. 1 for a proposed \$17.6 million expansion of the Elmore Medical Center in Mountain Home. The money would finance a 31,000 square-foot expansion and modernization to meet the needs of Elmore County's rapidly growing population.

#### **Boise County**

- Ultimate Log and Custom Homes, located at the old sawmill in Horseshoe Bend, has just begun the first phase of its long awaited Riverbend Development on 75 acres near the old mill. Construction is expected to create at least 30 jobs in Horseshoe Bend, most likely being filled by the local work force. Phase one consists of 56 homes on 9.2 acres, 14 being affordable housing costing no more than \$136,100. The requirement is mandated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Division. Phase two will involve a gated community on 29 acres with homes starting around \$400,000. Phase three calls for town homes overlooking the Payette River. The Riverbend Development will also include 19 acres for retail businesses and 17 acres for light manufacturing.

#### **Washington County**

- Jon-Lin Foods of Weiser, which purchased Appleton Produce in 2004, recently announced the production facility will close by mid-August, putting over 250 people out of work. The employees will be receiving an undisclosed severance package and help finding new jobs. Jon-Lin Foods was able to sell its two other processing plants in Colton, Calif., and Marlin, Texas, to McCain Foods, but McCain was not interested in the Weiser facility.

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